



## State Legislative Update for the Week of March 16 - 20, 2015

*Monday, March 16, 2015*

### **Senate Session**

Bill introductions of veterans interest:

#### **Senator Saxhaug introduced:**

**SF 1778:** A bill for an act relating to capital investment; appropriating money for a new veterans nursing home in Bemidji.

Referred to the Committee on Capital Investment.

### **House Session**

Bill introductions of veterans interest:

#### **Schoen and Hamilton introduced:**

**HF 1880:** A bill for an act relating to human services; appropriating money for culturally specific mental health services for Southeast Asian veterans.

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Veterans Affairs Division.

#### **Persell introduced:**

**HF 1932:** A bill for an act relating to capital investment; appropriating money for a new veterans nursing home in Bemidji.

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on State Government Finance.

### **Committee Hearings**

Committee: **House Veterans Affairs Division**

Chair: Rep. Bob Dettmer

Agenda:

**HF 506** (Schoen): LPC, LPCC, or LADC temporary licensing provided for former and current military members. This bill provides a process for qualified current members—and their spouses—and former members of the military to receive expedited, temporary licenses in the following professions: licensed professional counseling (LPC), licensed professional clinical counseling (LPCC), and licensed alcohol and drug counseling (LADC). The committee report was adopted, as amended, and re-referred to Health and Human Services Reform.

**HF 1556** (Lueck): Hire a Veteran Month changed from May to July. This bill would change “Hire a Veteran Month” from May to July. The designation is in honor of the more than 48,000,000 citizen soldiers who, as of January 1, 2005, have served in the United States armed forces. The bill was moved and re-referred to the State Government Finance.

**HF 127** (Dettmer): USS Minnesota commissioning activities grant funding provided, and money appropriated. As introduced, this bill appropriates \$200,000 in FY 2016 from the general fund to the Adjutant General of Military Affairs for a grant to the Minnesota Navy League to support the commissioning of the USS Minnesota. The grant is provided upon the condition that each dollar is matched by private sector funds that are not used to match any other state grant. An amendment was adopted that would change the language to appropriate \$200,000 each to the Minnesota Navy League, the US Department of the Army Emergency Relief program, the US Air Force Aid Society, the US Coast Guard Mutual Relief Society and the US Marine Corps Semper Fi fund. The bill was moved, as amended, and re-referred to the State Government Finance.

**HF 1673** (Newton): Commissioner of veterans affairs guardianship program repealed. This bill repeals the statute that authorizes a district court to appoint the Commissioner of Veterans Affairs as guardian of the estate of a veteran or dependent when the court finds appointment of a guardian to be necessary. The bill was moved and re-referred to the State Government Finance Committee.

***Tuesday, March 17, 2015***

### **House Session**

Bill introductions of veterans interest:

#### **Pugh introduced:**

**HF 1942:** A resolution memorializing Congress and the President of the United States to provide funding to maintain and restore the Officers' Club building located on the grounds of the historic Fort Snelling and to provide additional funding to support the valuable services that the 934th Airlift Wing provides to military officers, military families, and civilians at the Officers' Club.

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on State Government Finance

### **Committee Hearings**

Committee: **Senate Environment and Energy**

Chair: Sen. John Marty

Agenda:

**SF 805** (Saxhaug): State park permit military personnel and disabled veterans exemptions modification. An annual permit must be issued without a fee to active military personnel, disabled veteran or their dependents if the person presents a qualifying military identification or veteran's determination letter or other official form of validation issued

by the VA or DoD. The bill was recommended to pass and re-referred to State and Local Government.

Committee: **Higher Education and Workforce Development**

Chair: Sen. Terri Bonoff

Agenda:

**SF 951** (Kiffmeyer): National Guard members resident status for higher education grants and scholarship purposes. This bill amends the definition of resident student to include all individuals who are active members of the Minnesota National Guard and reside in the state of Minnesota or who are active members of the reserve component of the United States armed forces who reside in Minnesota and whose duty station is located in Minnesota. This change would make all resident National Guard members eligible for the Office of Higher Education grant and scholarship programs. This bill does not affect a student's eligibility for resident tuition rate at the University of Minnesota or at a Minnesota state college or university. Each postsecondary institution sets its own qualifications for resident or nonresident status; residency determinations are not directly regulated by state law. The bill was recommended to pass, as amended, and referred to the Finance Committee.

Committee: **House Mining and Outdoor Recreation Policy**

Chair: Rep. Tom Hackbarth

Agenda:

**HF 243** (Newton): Driver's licenses and Minnesota identification cards Purple Heart designation established, and state park permits provided. The committee report, as amended, was re-referred to Transportation Policy and Finance Division.

*Wednesday, March 18, 2015*

**Senate Session**

Bill introductions of veterans interest:

**Senator Reinert introduced:**

**S.F. No. 1828:** A resolution memorializing Congress and the President of the United States to provide funding to maintain and restore the Officers' Club building located on the grounds of the historic Fort Snelling and to provide additional funding to support the valuable services that the 934th Airlift Wing provides to military officers, military families, and civilians at the Officers' Club.

Referred to the Committee on State and Local Government.

**House Session**

Bill introductions of veterans interest: None

**Committee Hearings**

Committee: **House State Government Finance**

Chair: Rep. Sarah Anderson

Agenda:

**HF 1556** (Lueck): Hire a Veteran Month changed from May to July. This bill would change “Hire a Veteran Month” from May to July. The designation is in honor of the more than 48,000,000 citizen soldiers who, as of January 1, 2005, have served in the United States armed forces. The bill was moved to the General Register.

**HF 546** (Dettmer): Government entity permitted to release military release forms to another government entity for purpose of locating records. Current law prohibits a government entity from releasing the contents of United States government form DD214 or DD215 or any other certificate of discharge from military service unless certain conditions are met. This prohibition does not apply to the release of forms DD214 or DD215 or other certificates of discharge by an employee or official within a government entity to another employee or official within that entity for official duties. This bill extends this exception to allow for the release of discharge documents to another government entity for purposes of locating records. The bill was amended to specify “government veteran service entity” and moved to the General Register.

Committee: **House Government Operations and Elections Policy**

Chair: Rep. Tim Sanders

Agenda:

**HF 283** (Kresha): Camp Ripley nearby lands designated as sentinel landscape, coordinating committee created, and report required. This bill establishes a coordinating committee to designate certain lands in the vicinity of Camp Ripley to be contained in the sentinel landscape. The purpose of this mission is to identify lands near Camp Ripley that are important to the nation’s defense and Camp Ripley’s role in the nation’s defense. Owners of designated lands will be encouraged, with the aid of incentives, to voluntarily manage their land in a manner that is consistent with Camp Ripley’s military mission. It also requires the Adjutant General, in consultation with the coordinating committee, to prepare a report, by January 16, 2017, on the committee’s work and progress in shaping Camp Ripley’s sentinel landscape.

***Thursday, March 19, 2015***

### **Senate Session**

Bill introductions of veterans interest:

**Senator Miller introduced:**

**SF 1914:** A bill for an act relating to capital investment; appropriating money for a veterans home in Fillmore County; allowing for nonstate contributions; authorizing the sale and issuance of state bonds.

Referred to the Committee on Capital Investment.

### **House Session**

Bill introductions of veterans interest: None

**HF 841**, a bill granting resident status for purposes of higher education grants and scholarships to certain active members of the military who reside in the state, was read for the third time, as amended, and placed upon its final passage. The bill passed, 130 – 0.

### **Committee Hearings**

Committee: **House State Government Finance**

Chair: Rep. Sarah Anderson

Agenda:

**HF 1673** (Newton): Commissioner of veterans affairs guardianship program repealed. This bill repeals the statute that authorizes a district court to appoint the Commissioner of Veterans Affairs as guardian of the estate of a veteran or dependent when the court finds appointment of a guardian to be necessary. The bill was moved to the General Register.

Committee: **Senate Environment and Energy**

Chair: Sen. John Marty

Agenda:

**SF 1415** (Tomassoni): Solar photovoltaic modules installation for a public utility solar project in Morrison county evaluation and approval requirement; appropriation. This bill outlines factors to be considered by the public utilities commission in approving solar photovoltaic modules installation for a public utility solar project at a military and civilian training facility in Morrison County. The language indicates only American made solar panels can be used as opposed to those produced in China. The bill, as amended, was recommended to pass and re-referred to the Finance Committee.

***Friday, March 20, 2015***

### **Committee Hearings**

Committee: **House Government Operations and Elections Policy**

Chair: Rep. Tim Sanders

Agenda:

**HF 745** (Howe): Veterans preference procedures and rights modified. This bill authorizes a veteran who requests a hearing upon notice of termination to select the body that will hear the veteran's challenge to the termination. If the veteran does not select a hearing body, the decision belongs to the governmental subdivision. It also mandates that governmental subdivisions must pay the costs associated with the hearings, including the veteran's attorneys' fees, if the veteran prevails. This language extends veteran preference termination protections to teachers. The bill was moved and re-referred to the Committee on State Government Finance.

**Upcoming Committee Hearings of Veterans Interest  
Week of March 23 - 27, 2015**

### **Monday, March 23, 2015**

Committee: **House Legacy Funding Finance**

Chair: Rep. Dean Urdahl, Josh Heintzeman

Room: Basement State Office Building

Time: 12:30 PM

Agenda:

**HF 129** (Dettmer): Big Marine Lake veterans rest camp improvement funding provided, and money appropriated.

**HF 453** (Hancock): Veterans programs funding provided, and money appropriated.

Committee: **House Veterans Affairs Division**

Chair: Rep. Bob Dettmer

Room: 200 State Office Building

Time: 12:45 PM

Agenda:

**HF 1942** (Pugh): Memorializing Congress and the President to provide funding to the Officers' Club building located at Fort Snelling and to provide additional funding to support the services the 934th Airlift Wing provides to officers, families, and civilians.

**HF 146** (Dettmer): Honor and Remember Flag designated as an official symbol of the state's commitment to military service members who have lost their lives in service to our country, and display of flag encouraged on certain days in certain public locations.

**HF 1420** (Metsa): Morrison County; solar photovoltaic module approval for a public utility solar project provided factors to be considered, and money appropriated.

Committee: **House Transportation Policy and Finance**

Chair: Rep. Tim Kelly

Room: Basement State Office Building

Time: 12:45 PM

Agenda;

**HF 243** (Newton): Driver's licenses and Minnesota identification cards Purple Heart designation established, and state park permits provided.

### **Wednesday, March 25, 2015**

Committee: **House Health and Human Services Finance**

Chair: Rep. Matt Dean

Room: 200 State Office Building

Time: 12:45 PM

Agenda:

**HF 1296** (Anderson): Stearns County provided grant for administrative funding to support a service provider serving veterans, and money appropriated.